

WHY WE SHARE

How to Tap into the Consumer Psyche to Drive Social Advocacy

While the act of sharing is not new, the rise of social media has created a fundamental shift in the way consumers share content and ideas, and the consumer-brand dynamic has changed forever. Word of mouth marketing (WOMM) is more prevalent than ever, consumer recommendations are expected in the purchase path, and the organizations that understand what motivates advocacy—empowering customers to market for them—are winning the race.

But what is it, exactly, that motivates consumers to share in the first place?

The 5 Core Motivations for Sharing

The New York Times, in a study¹ conducted with Latitude Research, offered a roundup of the five core-human wants and/or needs that spur sharing:

- **To bring valuable and entertaining content to others**
49% (of respondents) say sharing allows them to inform others of products they care about and potentially change opinions or encourage action
- **To define ourselves to others**
68% share to give people a better sense of who they are and what they care about
- **To grow and nourish our relationships**
78% share information online because it lets them stay connected to people they may not otherwise stay in touch with
- **Self-fulfillment**
69% share information because it allows them to feel more involved in the world
- **To get the word out about causes or brands**
84% share because it is a way to support causes or issues they care about

Which motivating factors are most applicable to your customers? The answer is all of the above. By giving consumers the tools to realize any of these core motivations, you're setting them up to satisfy their own inherent needs, promoting your brand in the process.

80% of all purchase cycles
(both B2B and B2C)
involve some form of WOM
recommendation
— Forrester Research

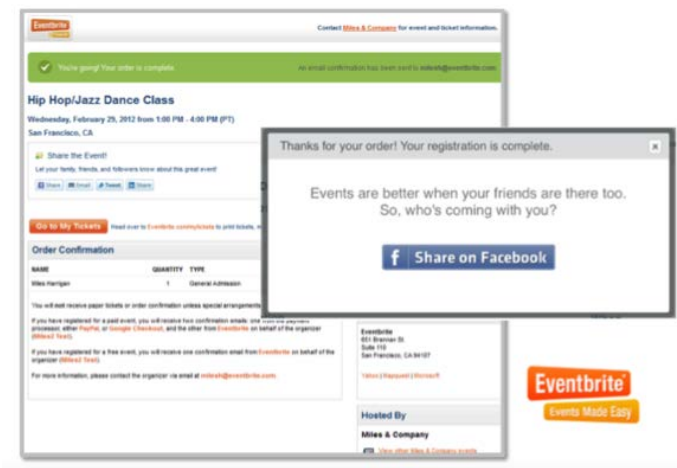
¹ The New York Times, "The Psychology of Sharing." Web.
<<http://nytmktg.whsites.net/mediakit/pos/>>

Where They Share (and Why)

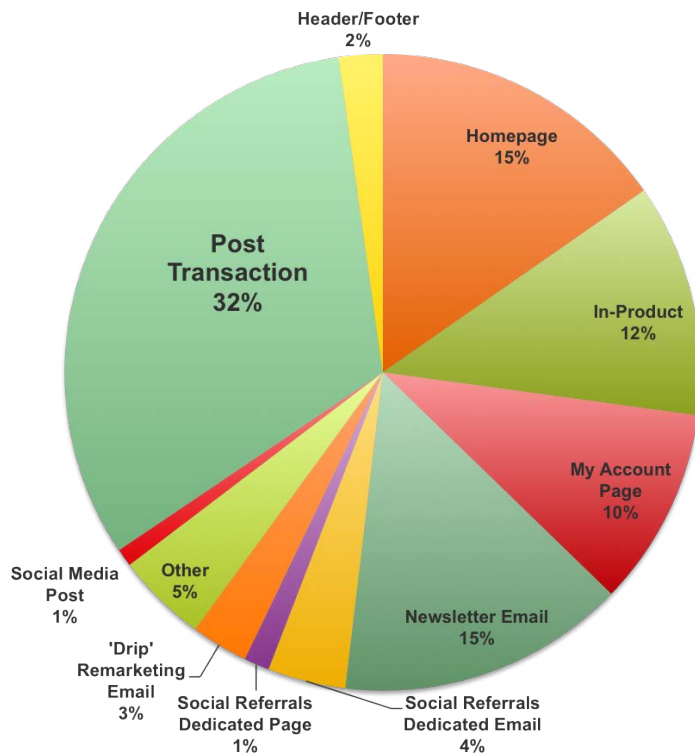
At what point in the purchase path are visitors most likely to share? While we're strong believers in experimenting with sharing opportunities throughout the entire shopping experience, we believe that a site visitor is never more engaged than after they've converted, or completed a transaction on your site. At this point, a customer has already identified a need or want, done research, compared products and vendors, and made a decision to place his or her trust in your hands.



By presenting customers with the ability to share their recent purchases or spread the word about your brand post-purchase, you're making it easy for them to satisfy any and all of the core motivations for sharing, at the point when they're most likely to do so. Whether customers want to express something about their personality through a purchase, get content in front of friends who will find value in it, or spread the word about their new favorite brand -- catching customers when they're most emotionally invested in your brand is key to an effective referral marketing strategy.



At Extole, we have powered referral marketing programs for almost 300 brands and we have found that giving consumers the ability to share on the post-purchase confirmation page resulted in the highest volume of shared content, compared to other promotional placements across a brand's owned assets.



The Bottom Line

As any marketer knows, understanding the customer—and why they buy—is critical to the success of any organization. The fundamentals haven't changed. What has changed, in our increasingly social world, is that we now also need to understand what motivates customers to become brand advocates who will tell their friends about products, services, and/or causes on behalf of brands.

About Extole

Extole enables brands to acquire new, high value customers at scale with its referral marketing platform. With Extole's simple, turnkey solution, marketers can create a complete, efficient, and reliable acquisition channel by encouraging their customers to refer new customers.



www.extole.com | www.extole.com/blog
 hello@extole.com
 (877) 739 - 8653